



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**For Immediate Release:**

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**Event: Plea**

**Defendant: W. Howard Burkeen, age 53**

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A resident of Canton Township pleaded guilty today to conspiring to defraud the federal financial aid program in connection with grants and loans provided to students of the now defunct NorthStar Institute of Technology (NorthStar) in Madison Heights, which was initially known as the Tyndale Technical Institute (TTI), announced Craig S. Morford, United States Attorney. Mr. Morford was joined in the announcement by Christopher J. Fox, Special Agent in Charge of the Midwest Region of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Inspector General.

Pleading guilty to one count of conspiring to defraud the Title IV program before U.S. District Judge Arthur J. Tarnow was W. Howard Burkeen, 53 years old, the former Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Faculty of William Tyndale College (WTC), located in Farmington Hills.

According to documents filed in the case, WTC, an institution founded in 1945 as the Detroit Bible Institute, offered 4-year and 2-year programs leading to bachelor's and associate's degrees, and was eligible to participate in, and was certified by the U.S. Department of Education to participate in, Title IV financial aid programs. TTI/NorthStar, a for-profit corporation established in early 2001 by Mr. Burkeen, James C. McHann, the former President of WTC, and a third former officer of WTC, offered non-degree programs in

computer applications and computer networks. TTI/NorthStar was not accredited and not eligible to participate in Title IV programs.

At today's plea hearing, Mr. Burkeen admitted that he was part of a conspiracy to obtain Title IV aid for TTI/NorthStar students that involved fraudulently describing TTI/NorthStar students as WTC students on applications for financial aid. As a result of the conspiracy, approximately \$535,000 in Pell Grants, Stafford and other federally insured loans, and VA educational benefits were improperly awarded to and provided for TTI/NorthStar students.

Mr. Burkeen is cooperating with the government. Under his plea agreement, he faces up to one year in prison and will be ordered to pay restitution to the Departments of Education and Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Morford, the United States Attorney, noted that Mr. Burkeen, Mr. McHann, and the third WTC officer who formed TTI/NorthStar were let go by William Tyndale College in the summer of 2001, and that WTC itself has not been charged and has not been a target of the government's investigation.

Mr. Burkeen's sentencing has been scheduled for April 6, 2005. The prosecution of Mr. McHann, who was indicted with Mr. Burkeen in April 2004, remains pending.

The investigation of this case has been conducted by the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education, with the assistance of the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephen Hiyama.